

National Science Foundation

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good cause for failing to meet the filing deadline.

(b) *Hearing procedures.* (1) The hearing will be presided over by an impartial hearing official.

(2) The hearing shall conform to procedures contained in the Federal Claims Collection Standards, 4 CFR 102.3(c). The burden shall be on the employee to demonstrate that the existence or the amount of the debt is in error.

§ 607.6 Written decision.

(a) The hearing official shall issue a final written opinion no later than 60 days after the filing of the petition.

(b) The written opinion will include a statement of the facts presented to demonstrate the nature and origin of the alleged debt; the hearing official's analysis, findings, and conclusions; the amount and validity of the debt, if any; and the repayment schedule, if any.

§ 607.7 Coordinating offset with another Federal agency.

(a) When the NSF is the creditor agency and the Chief Financial Officer determines that an employee of another agency (i.e., the paying agency) owes a debt to the NSF, the Chief Financial Officer shall, as appropriate:

(1) Certify in writing to the paying agency that the employee owes the debt, the amount and basis of the debt, the date on which payment was due, and the date the Government's right to collect the debt accrued, and that this part 607 has been approved by the Office of Personnel Management.

(2) Unless the employee has consented to salary offset in writing or signed a statement acknowledging receipt of the required procedures, and the written consent is sent to the paying agency, the Chief Financial Officer must advise the paying agency of the action(s) taken under this part 607, and the date(s) they were taken.

(3) Request the paying agency to collect the debt by salary offset. If deductions must be made in installments, the Chief Financial Officer may recommend to the paying agency the amount or percentage of disposable pay to be collected in each installment;

(4) Arrange for a hearing upon the proper petitioning by the employee.

(b) When the NSF is the creditor agency and the employee is in the process of separating from the Federal service, the NSF must submit its debt claim to the paying agency as provided in this part. The paying agency must certify the total amount collected, give a copy of the certification to the employee, and send a copy of the certification and notice of the employee's separation to the NSF. If the paying agency is aware that the employee is entitled to Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund or other similar payments, it must certify to the agency responsible for making such payments that the debtor owes a debt, including the amount of the debt, and that the provisions of 5 CFR 550.1108 have been followed.

(c) When the NSF is the creditor agency and the employee has already separated from Federal service and all payments due from the paying agency have been paid, the Chief Financial Officer may request, unless otherwise prohibited, that money payable to the employee from the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund or other similar funds be collected by administrative offset.

(d) When the NSF is the paying agency, upon receipt of a properly certified debt claim from another agency, deductions will be scheduled to begin at the next established pay interval. The employee must receive written notice that NSF has received a certified debt claim from the creditor agency, the amount of the debt, the date salary offset will begin, and the amount of the deduction(s). NSF shall not review the merits of the creditor agency's determination of the validity or the amount of the certified claim. If the employee transfers to another agency after the creditor agency has submitted its debt claim to NSF and before the debt is collected completely, NSF must certify the amount collected. One copy of the certification must be furnished to the employee. A copy must be furnished to the creditor agency with notice of the employee's transfer.

§ 607.8 Procedures for salary offset.

(a) Deductions to liquidate an employee's debt will be by the method and

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in the amount stated in the Chief Financial Officer's notice of intention to offset as provided in § 607.4. Debts will be collected in one lump sum where possible. If the employee is financially unable to pay in one lump sum, collection must be made in installments.

(b) Debts will be collected by deduction at officially established pay intervals from an employee's current pay account unless alternative arrangements for repayment are made.

(c) Installment deductions will be made over a period not greater than the anticipated period of employment. The size of installment deductions must bear a reasonable relationship to the size of the debt and the employee's ability to pay. The deduction for the pay intervals for any period must not exceed 15% of disposable pay unless the employee has agreed in writing to a deduction of a greater amount.

(d) Unliquidated debts may be offset against any financial payment due to a separated employee including but not limited to final salary or leave payment in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3716.

§ 607.9 Refunds.

(a) NSF will promptly refund to an employee any amounts deducted to satisfy debts owed to NSF when the debt is waived, found not owed to NSF, or when directed by an administrative or judicial order.

(b) Another creditor agency will promptly return to NSF any amounts deducted by NSF to satisfy debts owed to the creditor agency when the debt is waived, found not owed, or when directed by an administrative or judicial order.

(c) Unless required by law, refunds under this section shall not bear interest.

§ 607.10 Statute of limitations.

If a debt has been outstanding for more than 10 years after NSF's right to collect the debt first accrued, the agency may not collect by salary offset unless facts material to the Government's right to collect were not known and could not reasonably have been known by the official or officials who were charged with the responsibility for discovery and collection of such debts.

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§ 607.11 Non-waiver of rights.

An employee's involuntary payment of all or any part of a debt collected under the regulations in this part will not be construed as a waiver of any rights that the employee may have under 5 U.S.C. 5514 or any other provision of law.

§ 607.12 Interest, penalties, and administrative costs.

Charges may be assessed on a debt for interest, penalties, and administrative costs in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3717 and the Federal Claims Collection Standards, 4 CFR 101.1.

PART 608—CLAIMS COLLECTION AND ADMINISTRATIVE OFFSET

Sec.

608.1 Purpose and scope.

608.2 Collection, compromise, and use of consumer reporting agencies.

608.3 Administrative offset.

608.4 Reductions of tax refunds.

AUTHORITY: 31 U.S.C. 3711, 3716, 3718 and 3720A.

SOURCE: 58 FR 68772, Dec. 29, 1993, unless otherwise noted.

§ 608.1 Purpose and scope.

(a) This part sets forth policies and procedures for the collection and compromise claims and the administrative offset of claims by the National Science Foundation (NSF) pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3711, 3716, 3718 and 3720A. It is not intended to limit or govern the rights of the NSF or the United States to collect, compromise, or administratively offset debts or claims under other authority and procedures that may be legally available to it.

(b) Matters not addressed in this part should be reviewed and handled in accordance with applicable statutory provisions and the Federal Claims Collection Standards issued jointly by the Attorney General and the Comptroller General (4 CFR parts 101 through 105).

(c) Any action other than the issuance of regulations specifically required to be done by the head of the agency by any of the statutes or regulations referred to in paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section shall be done on behalf of NSF by its Chief Financial